

# ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS

2014

## **Black Range Ranger District** Gila National Forest

Black Mountain Allotment #223



Prepared By: /s/ Sean Brown Date:  
Range Staff

Reviewed By: /s/ John Richardson Date:  
Permittee

Approved By: /s/ Larry D. Cosper Date:  
District Ranger

**BLACK RANGE RANGER DISTRICT**  
**2014 ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS**

**Black Mountain Allotment**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

These Annual Operating Instructions document your discussion with Sean Brown and Shane Shannon on January 13, 2014 at the Black Range Ranger District Office.

**Permitted Use:**

Permittee	Number & Class of livestock	Season
Double Spring Ranch LLC	474 cow/calf 10 Horses	03/01 – 02/28

**As per Decision Notice Signed September 30, 2004, up to 7,676 AUMs may be authorized per year. Stocking could be achieved with cow/calf pairs or yearlings. Any combination of these types are permitted as long as the total number of permitted AUMs is not exceeded in the grazing year (March 1 to February 28).**

**Authorized Use**

Permittee	Number and Class of Livestock	Dates
Double Spring Ranch LLC	253 cow/calf 1076 yrln g 10 Horses	03/01 – 02/28 4/1-9/30 3/1-2/28

**Pasture Rotation:**

Pasture	# of cattle	Use Period	Comments
University	190 yrln g	04/01-09/30	
Indian	190 yrln g	04/01-09/30	
Cooney	450 yrln g	04/01-09/30	
Black Mesa	246 yrln g	04/01-09/30	
Houghton	74 c/c	3/1-2/28	
Elmo	60 c/c	3/1-2/28	
Bear	59 c/c	3/1-2/28	
Kennedy	60 c/c	3/1-2/28	

**II. IMPROVEMENT MAINTENANCE**

All range improvements assigned in the 10-year Term Grazing Permit are to be maintained in functioning condition. In the event these improvements cannot be brought up to a functioning

condition, you should notify this office so we can schedule them for reconstruction as funds become available. Maintenance to standard is required even if you have taken “**nonuse**”.

Range improvements are planned for the Black Mountain Allotment during the upcoming grazing season.

- Continued maintenance of water developments, windmills, fences, and corrals as needed to successfully facilitate the grazing operation.
- Permittee has requested dirt tanks located on the allotment to be cleaned. The District is working on completing the arc surveys and will contact the permittee when the clearances are complete.
- Maintain Indian and University Pasture Boundary Fence.
- Replace Elmo Pipeline. Arc survey will be required prior to work being done on the Elmo Pipeline. The District will schedule a day to complete the survey at a later date.

### **III. ALLOTMENT STATUS**

These Instructions implement the NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) decision for the Black Mountain Allotment dated September 30, 2004 and the Black Mountain Allotment Management Plan.

### **IV. OTHER ITEMS DISCUSSED**

The District Ranger will authorize necessary changes to this AOI to accommodate fire management.

### **V. SPECIAL MANAGEMENT CONCERNS**

#### **Wildlife and Fish**

There is documentation that identifies protected and restricted Mexican Spotted Owl habitat on the Black Mountain Allotment. MSO consultation with US Fish and Wildlife requires allowable use levels not to exceed 35% utilization on uplands.

Stock tanks must be surveyed for possible aquatic habitat before earth-disturbing maintenance is authorized.

The Chiricahua leopard frog was listed as a threatened species in 2002 by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. We have completed grazing consultation on your allotment regarding the effects of livestock grazing on the Chiricahua leopard frog. We determined that livestock grazing will either have no effect or will not adversely affect the Chiricahua leopard frog. As a result of this determination, there were no changes required of your grazing permit. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service concurred with this determination. Therefore, consultation has been completed. A copy of this consultation is on file with your local Ranger District.

The Forest Service will be directly engaged in communication and assistance in the Blue Range Wolf Reintroduction effort. Any management actions that may require movement of cattle, changes in rotation, season of use or removal from a pasture or allotment must be approved by the District Ranger. We encourage you to cooperate with the Interagency Field Team, New Mexico Game and Fish and U.S. Fish and Wildlife in management of the wolves. Please stay in communication with range personnel or the District Ranger if concerns or question arise.

## **Heritage and Cultural**

You must obtain permission from this office, before conducting earth- disturbing activities on the National Forest. The Forest Service will arrange inspections of project areas and will prepare appropriate environmental and cultural documents before earth-disturbing activities proceed. These activities include road/earthen tank maintenance, as well as construction/reconstruction of trails, roads, earthen tanks, etc. Do not conduct any earth-disturbing activities on the Forest without written clearance from this office.

## **VI. MONITORING OF KEY AREAS**

**Monitoring:** The range personnel will conduct allotment inspections each year to ensure compliance with the terms and condition addressed in the Term Grazing Permit, including the Allotment Management Plan and Annual Operating Instructions. The permittee may also schedule inspections at any time.

Key areas for monitoring are identified as riparian areas and transect cluster locations. Additional key areas may be identified during the season based on routine monitoring.

The idea of a key area is to find a site that is representative of a larger area in which cattle obtain the majority of their required forage resources. Key area monitoring will avoid areas directly adjacent to permanent water sources, cattle trails, roads, and fence lines.

Upland areas will be monitored for use on perennial grass species.

District personnel will contact the permittee to coordinate site visits to monitor key areas. Permittee participation is encouraged. Forage utilization estimates will be consistent with the Forest Service Range Analysis Handbook methodology, and may also include FS Regional stubble-height standards, as well as other techniques generally accepted in the field of range management.

## **VII. NEPA AND APPEAL RIGHTS**

These Instructions implement the NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) decision for the Black Mountain Allotment dated September 30, 2004, and are not eligible for appeal under 36 CFR 214.